

## BCJB Board Meeting

20<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### Teams Meeting

Name	Organisation
Festus Akinbusoye (FA)	Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner ( <b>Chair</b> )
Dave Collins (DCS)	Luton Borough Council
Doug Charlton (DCN)	Probation Service
Duncan Young (DY)	Bedfordshire Police
Duncan Young (DY)	Bedfordshire Police
Emma Harwood (EH)	Legal Aid
Francoise Julian (FJ)	Bedfordshire OPCC, Criminal Justice Projects & BCJB Mgr
Gemma McCormack (GM)	Bedfordshire OPCC
Graeme Vann (GV)	HMP Bedford
Ian Dalgarno (ID)	Bedfordshire Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Kate Somarkis (KS)	Magistrates Courts
Kerry White (KW)	HMCTS on behalf of Ian Miller
Matt Thompson (MT)	Hertfordshire Police
Nick Titchener (NT)	Defence – Lawtons Law
Rachel Mort (RM)	Crown Prosecution on behalf of Jaswant Narwal
Sarah Pacey (SP)	Luton Borough Council
Sarah Pacey (SP)	Public Health, Luton
Susan Childerhouse (SC)	Central Bedfordshire
Trevor Davidson (TD)	Bedfordshire Police

Item No.	Topic
1.	<p><b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies:</b></p> <p>ID welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that FA would be joining the meeting shortly and apologies noted.</p>
2.	<p><b>Minutes of previous meeting &amp; Action Log:</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were discussed and agreed as an accurate record. FJ went through the Action Log and the following actions were discussed;</p> <p><b>22/23-21</b> HMICFRS Mental Health Recommendations – This is being progressed by MT and FJ. FJ was asked to look at a training programme for the criminal justice system an update on progress will be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>MT updated that regarding the timeliness of mental health records going on to custody records, an interim process is in place whereby when they are completed the custody</p>

	<p>team scan the assessment so that they are on the system. There is a meeting being held on the 27<sup>th</sup> with an NHS lead to cascade training to providers and staff. A process is in place to deliver training and this will hopefully be signed off and completed within the next 8 weeks an update to be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>22/23-23</b> FJ advised that IM was asked to look into listings in the Crown Court and provide a detailed report to address issues discussed at the previous meeting. IM is progressing this and will table this at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>22/23 –24</b> FJ advised that DP sent her apologies for the meeting today but has provided a paper to be tabled for information. TD stated that he is attending the meeting today in place of DP and informed that there is no way of tracking the information at Magistrates Court and as such, the update is that we do not have the data to track special measures. FJ advised that feedback for the Police should be forwarded to the CJB email.</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>HMCTS and BCJB Workstream Highlight Reports:</b></p> <p><b>a) HMCTS</b></p> <p>KW advised that IM is unable to attend the meeting but provided an update in IM's absence. KW shared that at the moment the courts are still working on recovery. Looking into Bedford Shire Hall to see if we can get CVP or more technology in there to make more use of it for Jury trials. Surveys are ongoing as the building in Bedford is a listed building but once the budget is approved we will be in a position to explore more options.</p> <p>We have recently had DAVE (Digital Audio-Visual Enhancements) installed in Court 2 at Luton Crown Court to bring the technology up to date. HMCTS are sitting as much as possible in as many courts as possible. In terms of recruitment, we are waiting for information on the number of judicial vacancies which have been filled but can confirm that new Court clerks have been appointed to support the courts so there are no staff issues. We are continuing to monitor impact and a Resident Judge is drafting guidance for legal professionals which will be distributed soon, stakeholders included.</p> <p><b>Victims &amp; Witnesses</b></p> <p>FJ advised that on this occasion the report has been tabled for information in DP's absence. Any queries should be emailed to the Board.</p> <p><b>b) Reducing Reoffending</b></p> <p>DCN updated that there is a lot of crossovers now with the Serious Violence Duty and Reducing Reoffending and there are a lot of meetings taking place. One of the key areas is improving housing for those being released from prison. Probation have recently agreed a housing protocol with Luton which we are hoping the other two authorities will be willing to adopt.</p> <p>Integrated offender management; There is a pack for women with custody pathways, developed for women offenders which can be circulated by Prison or them. It has all the elected specialists.</p>

Serious Violence, most custody teams vetting has been completed to provide in cell service or quick interviews for ETE, apprenticeships etc. FJ is working on the strategic plan for the next two years and looking into more reducing reoffending pathways.

DCN expressed concern that work with the Serious Violence Duty has set the work of the RRB back a little but we are working to get this back on track. DCN recognised the crossover with the Reducing Reoffending Board and the Serious Violence Duty Board and agreed it is a good thing to have a crossover as there are more eyes on these issues.

DCN shared that he joined the Probation Service in December 2022 and at that time there was a high vacancy rate. A recruitment drive over the past six months has shown some success. Probation Officers remain challenging to find but we are going to be starting a rolling campaign through the summer. DCN assured the Board that risk is being covered at this time, there is no sickness and the team is working well together.

**Action:** FA asked for the job adverts to be shared with the OPCC so that we can support with sharing these and hopefully encourage more applications.

FJ advised that the RRB has established a new subgroup, related to women in the criminal justice system. We will be working on diverting women to other services from custody rather than criminalising them when it has been identified that they are first time offenders resulting from domestic abuse. This will be joint led with the OPCC and the Force and Partners will be contacted for their input and support.

#### **d) PPMG**

FJ shared this is the performance workstreams and is chaired by the CPS. The meeting took place last week, we haven't had a data lead for a very long time but we do have someone in place now. The minutes and action log from this meeting will be tabled at future BCJB meetings for information.

A detailed performance report from Bedfordshire was tabled at the PPMG last week and a couple of items were identified for further discussion at the BCJB, these related to Probation staff levels discussed above and evidence led domestic abuse prosecutions.

KS advised that the evidence led prosecutions had been raised as a potential issue with HMCTS but there is no evidence to showing any issues, partners were advised to contact the HMCTS when concerns are raised to ensure timely learning.

KS advised that she has been the domestic abuse lead for 25 years and shared there are two ways in which the evidence led prosecutions can be successful; a) if they have been prepared as evidence led from the beginning, they tend to be the stronger ones that go through. The weaker ones are when the complainant was on board but then didn't attend the court hearing, the prosecutor is then trying to push this through on evidence led prosecution; b) When coming through the remand

	<p>court witnesses are not fully prepped and this may be where there is a weakness. KS advised that there are some refresher training courses for professionals booked for this year which may be of interest. RM shared that she will feedback this information to her colleagues in the CPS.</p> <p>FJ asked how the CJS could better prepare for evidence led prosecutions?</p> <p>KS advised that a complainant will get very nervous when the suspected perpetrator is going through custody and what will happen when they are released. We therefore have to go on the basis that the complainant is on board at the moment, but they may not be towards the end. Gathering information such as body worn video's, 999 calls etc., needs to be provided to the CPS as soon as possible. The more preparation for the files the better.</p> <p>RM shared that remand, puts additional pressures on the CPS and Police to meet timescales and prepare cases. DY shared that the Force is listening and keen to get this right.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> DY will ensure the Police has a response prepared for the next meeting in the absence of DP and TR.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> FJ to arrange a meeting with the Force, CPS and Courts to discuss this matter further.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>BCJB Compliance with LCJB Guidance:</b></p> <p>FJ advised that this item had been on the agenda for the planning meeting and apologised that the meeting was cancelled at short notice.</p> <p>FJ went through a presentation of the LCJB Guidance, which led to a discussion regarding accountability and information sharing.</p> <p>KS noted the importance of all partners having an opportunity to report on where we are with performance data. If we can see where there are problems then we can react to that, it would be confidential and it is something we can build in enough resource slots to accommodate any issues in the criminal justice system for a partnership response in terms of supporting one another.</p> <p>DCN asked regarding data for the Courts, KS advised it would be the number of on the day reports needing completion. KS shared we are just about to list and have had to put in extra PSR slots so we need to ensure that Probation are covered. DCN will raise this during the next Reoffending Board Meeting and DCN advised that additional Duty Officers in Court have just been appointed.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> FJ will provide DCN with details of the Performance Board meetings so that Probation can report on Performance there in future.</p> <p>FJ provided assurance in terms of the National Guidance, that in comparison to the Guidance, the work we have been doing over the last couple of quarters has put the Board in a good place, there aren't many gaps and the work is ongoing.</p>

<p>5.</p>	<p><b>BCJB Planning - Priorities 2023-25</b></p> <p>The last planning meeting was cancelled but it is important that we have a discussion about priorities to look at over the next couple of years:</p> <p><u>Mental health and partnership working</u></p> <p>FJ proposed that mental health should be carried forward as an ongoing theme and partnership working included as an overarching priority.</p> <p>KS stated that mental health refresher training was delivered to legal advisers in January as the remand courts are seeing an increase of those with mental health concerns coming through the courts.</p> <p><u>Disproportionality</u></p> <p>Disproportionality was discussed as a potential area of focus for the Board. KS advised that a Disproportionality Subgroup has been set up in Thames Valley which includes the CPS and Probation. FJ advised that these discussions are being picked up in the Board's existing subgroups and by the Board as YoT are scheduled to provide a report on disparities at the next meeting. However, there is potential for us to explore this further in Bedfordshire.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> DCS shared that an exercise was undertaken by YoT 12 months ago, looking at young people in custody (18-25 age group), which highlighted the disproportionate representation across all our disadvantaged communities. It was agreed that YoT should present an updated research paper to the September Board.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> FJ and MT to have a discussion regarding the work that has taken place in Avon and Somerset in relation to disproportionality to look at how we can carry this forward in Bedfordshire.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> FJ to look into how the Board will approach race and disproportionality in future and report back to the Board.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> All of the three priorities submitted to the Board (mental health, partnership working and disproportionality) were agreed. FJ to table a Business Plan and updated Terms of Reference to the Board for sign off.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>AOB:</b></p> <p>Public meeting update – FJ advised that she has been given a plan from the media team and advised that a date for the diary will follow once agreed with the comms team.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>19<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 1000am – 1200pm</p>